

## Before the Building Practitioners Board

Appeal No. A1375

Between: [Omitted] (the Appellant)

And: The Registrar

In the matter of: An appeal against a decision of the Registrar of Licensed Building Practitioners to decline a Design AoP 2 Licence. The Appellant seeks to be licensed with a Design AoP 1 Licence.

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### Decision of the Board under section 330(1)(a) of the Building Act 2004

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Hearing Location: Auckland  
Hearing Type: In Person  
Hearing Date: 9 February 2023  
Decision Date: 15 February 2023

#### Board Members Present:

Mrs F Pearson-Green, LBP, Design AoP 2 (Presiding)  
Mr D Fabish, LBP, Carpentry and Site AoP 2  
Ms K Reynolds, Construction Manager

#### Procedure:

The matter was considered by the Building Practitioners Board (the Board) under the provisions of Part 4 of the Building Act 2004 (the Act), the Licensed Building Practitioners Rules 2007 (the Rules) and the Board's Procedures for the Management of Appeals (the Appeal Procedures).

#### Decision:

The Board has decided, under section 335 of the Act, to modify the decision appealed against and to **grant** a Design AoP1 Licence.

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## Summary of the Board’s Appeal Decision

[1] The Appellant is granted a Design AoP 1 licence.

### The Board

[2] The Board is a statutory body established under the Building Act.<sup>1</sup> Its functions include hearing appeals against certain decisions of the Registrar in accordance with subpart 2 of Part 4 of the Act.

### Procedure on Appeal

[3] Under section 335 of the Act, an appeal proceeds by way of rehearing. On hearing an appeal, the Board may confirm, reverse, or modify the decision or action appealed against. The Board may also make any other decision or take any other action that the decision maker (the Registrar) could have made. The Board cannot review any part of a decision or action not appealed against.

### The Registrar’s Decision

[4] To become licensed, an applicant person must satisfy the Registrar that they meet the applicable minimum standard for the class or classes of licence applied for. <sup>2</sup>The minimum standard is prescribed by rule 4 of the Rules. It states:

**4       MINIMUM STANDARD OF COMPETENCE FOR EACH CLASS OF  
LICENCE**

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<sup>1</sup> Section 341 of the Act.

<sup>2</sup> Refer rule 9(1)(a) of the Rules

- (1) *The minimum standard of competence for a class of licence is meeting all of the competencies set out for that class of licence in Schedule 1.*
- (2) *In determining whether a person meets a competency, regard must be had to the extent to which the person meets the performance indicators set out for that competency in Schedule 1.*

- [5] Under rule 12 of the Rules, the Registrar must make a decision on the application. The Registrar's decision to grant or decline a licence must be informed by an assessor's recommendation.<sup>3</sup>
- [6] On 23 September 2022, the Registrar informed the Appellant that her application to be granted a Design AoP 2 licence had been declined. The Appellant was informed of her right to appeal the decision.

### **The Appeal**

- [7] On 13 October 2022, the Appellant filed an appeal with the Board against the Registrar's decision not to grant a Design AoP 2 licence. The Appellant appealed to be granted a Design AoP 1 licence.
- [8] The Board's Appeals Procedures stipulate that the Registrar is to provide a report that includes all evidence used to reach the decision, including the assessors' recommendation (the Report). The Report noted the Appellant had failed to demonstrate the following competencies for the class of license applied for:
- a. *Competency 1: Comprehend and apply knowledge of the regulatory environment of the building construction industry*
  - b. *Competency 2: Manage the building design process*
  - c. *Competency 3: Establish design briefs and scope of work and prepare preliminary design*
  - d. *Competency 4: Develop design and produce construction drawings and documentation*
  - e. *Competency 5: Manage construction phase design*
- [9] Under section 335(4) of the Act, the Board must not review any part of a decision or action not appealed against. On that basis, and on the basis of the Report, the matters under appeal were those noted above.
- [10] The burden of proof lies with the Appellant. It is for the Appellant to provide sufficient evidence to establish, on the balance of probabilities, that she meets sufficient of the performance indicators for those competencies 1, 2, 3 and 4, that

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<sup>3</sup> Rules 10 and 11 of the Rules

are being appealed to be granted a Design AoP 1 licence. If the Registrar appears at an appeal hearing,<sup>4</sup> the matter proceeds using an adversarial process.

[11] The Registrar did not seek leave to appear.

### **The Hearing**

[12] Prior to the hearing, the Appellant provided further evidence to support the appeal. This included her qualifications and examples to demonstrate competencies 1-4 for a Design AoP 1 licence. The Appellant provided Building Consent Documentation for two projects that she had been involved in. The first being a Multi-unit development in [Omitted], and the second, a two level dwelling in [Omitted].

[13] At the hearing, the Appellant gave an overview of her qualifications and experience gained when in China. The Appellant went on to outline her architectural work experience since being employed in New Zealand from 2019.

[14] The Board questioned the Respondent as regards the performance indicators in Schedule 1 of the Rules for those competencies that were appealed.

[15] The Board questioned the Appellant about her regulatory knowledge and the Licensed Building Practitioners scheme.

[16] The Board worked through a mock design scenario of a single-story detached townhouse based on a site portrayed by a photograph on the shared screen. The Board questioned the Appellant through all the stages of a design, from client brief, fee proposal, developed design, costings, and documentation for building consent, including consultation with sub-consultants.

[17] The Board then questioned the Appellant on various areas of the two projects that she had submitted in support of her appeal.

[18] The Appellant was supported by two witnesses:

[Omitted] – her Supervisor (Design AoP 2, [Omitted]) who gave evidence in person; and

[Omitted] – Consulting Engineer (Chartered Professional Engineer, CPEng [Omitted] who gave evidence by telephone

[19] [Omitted] had tutored and supervised the Appellant. He spoke to the Appellant's skills in producing architectural designs and documentation for resource and building consents. He supported the Appellant's appeal and the granting of a Design AoP 1 licence.

[20] [Omitted] gave evidence that he had worked with the Appellant for approximately four years. Over that time, they had worked together on approximately fifty projects where he had been engaged to provide structural engineering. He noted that the

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<sup>4</sup> The Registrar may seek leave to appear and be heard under clause 2.9.16(a) of the appeal procedures either in person or by legal counsel.

Appellant was a capable architectural designer and supported her receiving a Design AoP 1 licence.

### **The Purposes of the Licensing Regime**

[21] The Building (Definition of Restricted Building Work) Order 2011 (New Zealand) stipulates that design work and building work on the primary structure and external moisture-management system of a house or a small-to-medium apartment building is restricted building work. Restricted building work applies to work that is carried out or supervised under a building consent<sup>5</sup>.

[22] Under section 84 of the Act:

*All restricted building work must be carried out or supervised by a licensed building practitioner [who is licensed] to carry out or supervise the work.*

[23] Given the above provisions, a person who wishes to carry out or supervise restricted building work, other than as an owner builder, must be licensed.

[24] The introduction of the licensed building practitioner regime was aimed at improving the skills and knowledge of those involved in residential construction. The following was stated as the intention to the enabling legislation<sup>6</sup>:

*The Government's goal is a more efficient and productive sector that stands behind the quality of its work; a sector with the necessary skills and capability to build it right first time and that takes pride in its work; a sector that delivers good-quality, affordable homes and buildings and contributes to a prosperous economy; a well-informed sector that shares information and quickly identifies and corrects problems; and a sector where everyone involved in building work knows what they are accountable for and what they rely on others for.*

[25] And, as was noted by the responsible Minister during the first reading of the legislative provisions that established it:<sup>7</sup>

*A robust licensing scheme with a critical mass of licensed builders means consumers can have confidence that their homes will be built right first time.*

[26] Within that context, it is important that the competence of those who seek to be licensed is thoroughly assessed so as to ensure that the legislative purposes of licensing are advanced, consumers are protected, and buildings are designed and constructed in a manner that makes them safe and healthy.

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<sup>5</sup> Refer section 401B of the Act.

<sup>6</sup> Hansard volume 669: Page 16053

<sup>7</sup> Hansard volume 669: Page 16053

### **Board's Conclusion and Reasoning**

- [27] On the basis of the evidence received and having taken into consideration the purposes of the licensing regime, the Board has decided that it will modify the decision of the Registrar and grant the Appellant a Design AoP 1 licence.
- [28] In making its decision, the Board noted the Appellant, through questioning, was able to demonstrate her knowledge of competencies 1-4 for a Design AoP 1 licence and had gained additional knowledge in some areas than she when she was originally assessed.
- [29] The Appellant has an understanding of her current level of competence and is strongly cautioned to work within it. The Appellant is aware of the areas where she requires gaining more knowledge and experience. Throughout the hearing, she demonstrated that she is aware of where to seek information or whom to approach. It was discussed that her current area of work is more commercial-focused and that she is advised to gain more experience in the residential area with support.
- [30] The Board expressed to the Appellant that she should continue her education by way of reading industry publications, attending seminars and joining industry organisations.
- [31] It was agreed at the end of the appeal hearing that her supervisor [Omitted] would continue to mentor [Omitted] and support her as she continues to grow her knowledge within the architectural and construction industry.

### **Board's Order**

- [32] Pursuant to s335(3) of the Act, the Board directs that the Registrar to issue a Design AoP 1 Licence to the Appellant as soon as is practicable.

### **Costs and Publication**

#### Costs

- [33] Under section 338(4) of the Act the Board may order any party to the appeal to pay to any other party to the appeal any or all of the costs incurred by the other party in respect of the appeal.
- [34] The Board has adopted the approach taken by the District Court to costs on appeal.
- [35] Based on the above, the Board's costs order is that neither party is to pay costs to the other party.

#### Publication

- [36] Section 339 of the Act provides:

**339 Orders as to publication of names**

- (1) *On an appeal under this subpart, the appeal authority may, if in its opinion it is proper to do so, prohibit the publication of the name or*

*particulars of the affairs of a licensed building practitioner or any other person.*

- (2) *In deciding whether to make an order under subsection (1), the appeal authority must have regard to—*
- (a) *the interests of any person (including, without limitation, the privacy of any complainant); and*
  - (b) *the public interest.*
- (3) *If the appeal authority prohibits the publication of the name or particulars of the affairs of a licensed building practitioner, the Registrar must remove the name or particulars of the affairs of that licensed building practitioner from the register in relation to the matter under appeal to the extent necessary to reflect the appeal authority's prohibition on publication.*

[37] Based on the above, the Board **will not** order further publication.

### **Right of Appeal**

[38] The right to appeal a Board decision of this type is provided for in section 330(2) of the Act<sup>i</sup>.

Signed and dated this 7<sup>th</sup> day of March 2023.



**Mrs F Pearson-Green**  
Presiding Member

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<sup>i</sup> **Section 330 Right of appeal**

- (2) *A person may appeal to a District Court against any decision of the Board—*
- (a) *made by it on an appeal brought under subsection (1)*

**Section 331 Time in which appeal must be brought**

*An appeal must be lodged—*

- (a) *within 20 working days after notice of the decision or action is communicated to the appellant; or*
- (b) *within any further time that the appeal authority allows on application made before or after the period expires.*